

in the same locality. Possibly this Eagle was mate to the fine female whose capture was noted by Prof. A. E. Verrill of New Haven in the January 'Auk' (XIV, p. 891). — C. L. RAWSON, *Norwich, Conn.*

**Northern Hawks in Massachusetts.** — The American Goshawk (*Accipiter atricapillus*) has been abundant in this section the past fall and winter. I myself have secured three specimens, one of which I caught in a steel trap. All that I have secured or seen, except one, were in adult plumage.

On Feb. 25, 1897, I drove within ten yards of a Rough-legged Hawk (*Archibuteo sancti-johannis*), in the light phase of plumage, perched by the roadside on the edge of a grove of white pines. — HERBERT K. JOB, *North Middleboro', Mass.*

**Swainson's Hawk in Michigan.** — I wish to record the capture of a Swainson's Hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*) taken by myself in Cheboygan County, Mich., in October, 1883. I can find but three other records for the State. — NORMAN A. WOOD, *Ann Arbor, Mich.*

**Note on *Elanus glaucus*.** — Benjamin Smith Barton's 'Fragments of the Natural History of Pennsylvania,' published in 1799, is a folio of pp. xviii + 24, so rare as to be little-known or almost forgotten. Many ornithologists might never have heard of it, had it not been for *Hirundo horreorum*, which Baird adopted in 1858 for the Barn Swallow. But in 1878 I gave a careful analysis of this tract (B. Coll. Vall., pp. 592-594), which made all its ornithological points accessible; and had due attention been paid to this matter, we should not now have to change certain names which have obtained undeserved currency through the deservedly high authority of the A. O. U. Check-List. Some objections which have been urged against Bartram's names do not extend to those of Barton, who was a strict binomialist, and whose identifiably described species must consequently be recognized if they happen to fall under our rule of priority. One of these is "*Falco glaucus* of Bartram," whose name and sufficient description are repeated by Barton, with due binomiality on p. 11 of his work. "Now," as I observed (*l. c.*, p. 593), "those who decline to have anything to do with Bartram, on the ground of his untenable nomenclature, will necessarily observe that *Elanus glaucus* (Barton, 1799) must replace *E. leucurus*," as Vieillot's *Milvus leucurus* dates 1818. Our Committee can hardly plead ignorance of the fact that *E. glaucus* has also stood as the name of the White-tailed Kite in my 'Key' since 1884; for that would argue an incredible unfamiliarity on their part with current ornithological literature. The mistake may be regarded as an oversight which we can hasten to correct in the next Supplement to the Check-List.

Reference to the Bibliography above mentioned will reveal a number of other Bartonian names which need attention. For example, *Certhia familiaris fusca* (Barton, 1799); for Barton's *C. fusca*, fully described, antedates Bonaparte's *C. americana* of 1838, as the name of the American

Brown Creeper. True, it is itself antedated by *C. rufa*, Bartram, 1791; but the present temper of the A. O. U. Committee throws Bartram out of the case. — ELLIOTT COUES, *Washington, D. C.*

**The Roadrunner as a Destroyer of Caterpillars.** — In southern California the passion vine is everywhere infested by a red butterfly (*Agraulis vanille*), the larva of which feeds extensively if not entirely upon this plant. So great is the damage that plants are often completely defoliated and become so unsightly that in some regions many have destroyed their vines and replaced them with other species, less desirable perhaps but less apt to breed a horde of pests.

Not long since I called on a friend living in the suburbs of San Diego who had a large number of unusually thrifty passion vines climbing over his fence. Upon inquiring the reason of their freedom from what I had considered an inevitable pest, he informed me that a pair of Roadrunners (*Geococcyx californicus*) had for several months paid daily visits to his vines, climbing through them in all directions until the last caterpillar had been captured.

He said that he was satisfied that several newly hatched chickens had gone to satisfy hungry Roadrunners on one or two occasions when the vines yielded less than usual, but they were welcome to a chick once in a while for their very valuable service in keeping in check a pest that none of our other native birds seem to feed upon. — A. W. ANTHONY, *San Diego, Cal.*

**How the Chimney Swift secures Twigs for its Nest.** — Among some of the beautiful drawings of birds done by Mr. L. A. Fuertes, and submitted to my approval by the Messrs. Macmillan of New York, with reference to their publication in a work for which I am partly responsible, there was one which I 'held up' for further consideration. This represented a Chimney Swift in the act of snapping off a bit of twig with its feet, like a hawk seizing its prey. We have always supposed the bird secured the object with its beak, as it dashed past on wing at full speed; or at any rate that has been my own belief for more years than I can remember. But Mr. Fuertes vouched for the correctness of his representation from actual observation. The question being thus raised, I set it forth recently in a query inserted in one of our popular periodicals,<sup>1</sup> asking for information. I have received a number of replies, mostly corroborating the traditional belief, on what purports to be sufficient observation of the bird in the act. But Mr. Fuertes is supported in his view by Mr. Frank J. Birtwell, of Dorchester, Mass., from whose letter I quote: "In 1894 I spent the summer at Yarmouth, Nova Scotia, where the Swift is common, nesting in unused chimneys of the village. The bird flies to a tree, usually a spruce, and

<sup>1</sup> 'The Nidologist' for March, just to hand, contains (pp. 80, 81) several replies to my interrogation — and these leave the case still open!